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U. S. Denies Part in Plot Against Diem

By Neil Sheehan

SAIGON, South Viet Nam, July 6 (UPI) — The United States Embassy today denied a Vietnamese government prosecutor's charge that the United States was involved in the abortive 1960 coup d'etat against President Ngo Dinh Diem.

The prosecutor made the charge yesterday at a special session of a military tribunal trying Vietnamese army officers and men as plotters in the coup attempt.

The U. S. Embassy declined to go beyond a simple verbal denial of the charge. It gave no indication that a formal protest would be made. The American disappointed community in Saigon had expected the United States to make a vigorous protest.

Many American officials consider the accusation a deliberate attempt to discredit the United States.

They were angered when Diem's brother and political adviser, Ngo Dinh Nhu, accused the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency of involvement in the unsuccessful coup during an interview with Washington Post correspondent Warren Unna in April.

The Vietnamese government knows damn well we had nothing to do with the coup, one American said.

Col. Nguyen Khanh Thi, commander of the 1960 rebels now in refuge in Cambodia, told an Associated Press correspondent several months ago that United States officials actually tried to discourage the coup. American agents persuaded the rebel units not to kill Diem and to try to

work with the Diem government.

U. S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires William Truehart told American newsmen "flatly, unequivocally and officially, the United States was not assisting, aiding or abetting those people who were trying to overthrow the government of Viet Nam in 1960." Truehart would not make further comment. He is now the senior U. S. diplomat in Saigon.

The accused plotters are 19 officers and men, all paratroopers who went on trial Friday. They pleaded during a lengthy public trial session today that they were forced or tricked into taking part by the seven paratroop officers who fled to Cambodia when the coup failed.

The prosecutor had indicated that light sentences would be imposed if the accused had actually been tricked or forced into participation. The seven leaders, being tried in absentia, are expected to get the death sentence.

A number of civilians will also be tried after the tribunal is finished with the soldiers. Some civilians will be tried in absentia.

Two United States officials, who have since left Viet Nam, were accused of helping in the plot.

George Carver, 28, a U. S. civilian employee of the military, and Howard Elting, deputy chief of the United States mission in Saigon at the time of the coup, were identified by a Vietnamese source as the men named in the government prosecutor's accusation.

Sources close to the U. S. Embassy said the Embassy

taking the line that since the charges were not made in public it would consider them as "rumors" and so it would not have to protest to the Vietnamese government.

Many of the American officials who reacted strongly to

the accusation in private conversation hold top posts in the U. S. intelligence network in Saigon.

Some here believe that by accusing the United States of helping in the 1960 plot, Diem's government aims to warn the U. S. against becoming involved in other coups, and by saying the U. S. promised to help the plotters and then deserted them, the government hopes to discredit the U. S. in the eyes of young, discontented army officers.

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U.S. DENIES AIDING '60 SAIGON REVOLT

**Charge Angers Americans
Trying to Help Vietnam—
Envoy to Hurry Back**

By HEDRICK SMITH
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 6—The State Department denied today any United States involvement in an attempted coup d'etat against the government of South Vietnam in November, 1960.

"The United States did not in any way aid, abet, support or encourage the insurgents," a State Department spokesman said. "Our role in 1960 was to avoid bloodshed."

This was an allusion to the efforts of former Ambassador Elbridge Durbrow, who called upon both the Government of President Ngo Dinh Diem and the insurgent troops to halt their fighting.

The United States Embassy in Saigon also has denied the charges of complicity in the 1960 coup attempt.

Charges against two former members of the embassy staff were made yesterday in Saigon by the prosecutor in the trial of 19 Vietnamese servicemen accused of taking part in the unsuccessful revolt.

He interrupted the formal trial to make his charges privately to the lawyers for the accused men.

Diem Sharply Criticized

The charges come at a time when Washington's relations with Saigon are more than normally troubled. United States officials have been sharply, though privately, critical of the Ngo Dinh Diem Government's handling of weeks of protests by Buddhists.

Reports from that country indicate that American officials are having increasing doubt about the Ngo Dinh Diem regime. Young Vietnamese army officers are reported to be increasingly at odds with the Government.

Officials here said the United States Embassy in Saigon had repeatedly told the Ngo Dinh Diem Government that charges of its complicity in the attempted coup were false. The accusations keep recurring; they are often repeated by President Ngo Dinh Diem's brother and chief adviser, Ngo Dinh Nhu.

Washington intends to rest its public case on today's terse denial and see how far the Saigon Government plans to press its case. It is hoped the issue will be allowed to blow over without seriously damaging the war effort in Vietnam against Communist guerrillas. Ambassador Frederick E. Nolting Jr. is cutting short a home visit and will return to Saigon early next week.

Officials said emphatically that Mr. Nolting's return was not hastened by the treason trial, but rather by the continuing turmoil in Saigon over the Buddhist protests against the Ngo Dinh Diem regime.

The Buddhists demanded redress for what they discrimination against their religion, culminated in May when troops fired on a Buddhist demonstration and killed nine persons.

In the course of the protests a Buddhist monk burned himself to death. A truce with the Government was finally reached.

Mr. Nolting had been scheduled to depart for Saigon next Friday after a round of briefings with officials here, some of which have been eliminated. He will be succeeded as Ambassador by Henry Cabot Lodge in late August.

Denial Made by Embassy

By DAVID HALBERSTAM

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, Vietnam, July 6—The American Embassy denied today charges that it had participated in an attempted coup in 1960 by paratroopers here.

The embassy made its denial only to American correspondents. There was no sign that it intended to make any protest to the Vietnamese Government for allowing recurrent charges to come up again.

Many members of the large United States mission here, who have been greatly angered by the recurrent charges of participation in the uprising, remained dissatisfied with the embassy's response. Similar charges against the United States, Vietnam's primary ally in the continuing guerrilla war, have recently been made by Ngo Dinh Nhu, the most powerful adviser to President Ngo Dinh Diem.

The charge of United States involvement was made yesterday as the trial of 19 officers and men began here. The prosecutor told defense lawyers in private session that two Americans were involved in the attempted coup. He named one as George Carver, an employee of the United States Embassy at the time of the rebellion. Vietnamese sources said the other person was Howard Elting, then deputy chief of the mission.

Denial Is Unequivocal

William Trueheart, United States Chargé d'Affaires, said: "Flatly, officially and unequivocally, there was no United States assistance, no aiding or abetting of those trying to overthrow the Government of Vietnam in 1960."

Trial of the 19 men, most of them officers and most of them paratroopers, continued today. Most of them told the court they were simply obeying orders and doing their duty.

Informed Vietnamese observers expect that the men being tried here will receive relatively light sentences and that the officers, being tried in absentia, who include the leaders of the uprising, will receive death sentences.

The prosecutor charged in open court yesterday that the rebels had conspired with a foreign power. In a private session he told defense lawyers that the foreign power was the United States.

He showed lawyers an unsigned document, said to have been written by rebel officers to Mr. Carver, declaring that he had promised help but had let them down.

A like charge was made by Ngo Dinh Nhu two months ago to a visiting correspondent. That charge followed two years of United States efforts here to eliminate Vietnamese suspicions of Americans. It angered the highest United States officials.

Vietnamese sources say the decision to try the alleged conspirators now was Ngo Dinh Nhu's. The trial is beginning 32 months after the offense and comes after more than two months of dispute between Buddhists and the government, and at a time of growing unrest within the army.

Trial Provides Warnings

In this view, holding the trial now serves to discourage plots by to warn Americans not to become involved if any plots get under way, and to warn the army that Americans cannot be trusted to give help if they promise it.

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to be a report by the French Ambassador that Americans were involved in the attempted coup. Informants said the document appeared to be legitimate. There was considerable doubt over the accuracy of the French statement. The Americans and French here do not work closely, nor do they confide in one another.

A French Embassy official said he did not know anything about such a document. The position of the United States Embassy today, in not making a stronger statement, was that so far in the trial references to the involvement of Americans were "rumors." That is in open session only a "for power" has been made.

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VIETNAM SAYS U.S. AIDED '60 REVOLT

19 Go on Trial for Uprising — Charges Considered Warning to Americans

By DAVID HALBERSTRAM
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, Vietnam, July 5 —

The prosecutor in the trial of 19 Vietnamese service men accused of taking part in an attempted coup d'état here in 1960 told defense lawyers in private session today that there was evidence that the United States Embassy had been involved in the attempt.

The embassy refused to comment. Privately, Americans were furious at the accusation, calling it unjust and unfounded. The United States has been South Vietnam's foremost ally during the war with pro Communist forces.

The prosecutor named two Americans who were here at the time as being involved with the coup's plotters. Informants said one was George Carver, an employe of the American military mission. It is understood the other accused American was of higher rank.

The trial of the 19 Vietnamese, most of them young officers, began here today. Timing of the trial is considered significant, since it comes at a time of political and military unrest in Saigon. The decision to schedule it now, 32 months after the plot failed, is read as a warning to any prospective plotters in the army. The attempt to involve Americans is also seen as a warning to them to stay out of any future attempted coups.

Unsigned Letter Offered

The 19 defendants are charged with rebellion and damaging national security. Seven others are being tried in absentia.

Lawyers for the defense began by arguing that the men committed only political crimes — that they attacked a government, but not the nation or the people. The crime of damaging national security, they argued, was limited to aiding a foreign power, the defense argued.

The prosecutor then said that he had documents showing foreign interference, but that he did not want to show them because it might damage diplomatic relations here. At this point prosecution and defense went into private session, and there the accusation was made.

As evidence the prosecutor is said to have produced an unsigned letter, supposed to be from one of the paratroopers to American officials. The letter accused the Americans of not having provided promised help to leaders of the plot. The prosecutor is also said to have exhibited an anonymous report giving details of the planned coup. This was said to have been found in an envelope addressed to the United States Embassy.

The defendants told their lawyers today that they knew nothing of any American involvement in the attempted coup. Informants here said today that while Vietnamese newspapermen were allowed to cover the trial, the developments regarding American involvement were to be reported only by foreign correspondents, with the Vietnamese journals ordered not to print that part of the account.

In a trial as highly political as this one, no one believes that it is just by chance that Americans suddenly find themselves involved.

Mr. Carver appears to be the man whom Ngo Dinh Nhu, the brother of President Ngo Dinh Diem and his leading adviser, mentioned to a visiting reporter as being involved in the attempted coup. Mr. Ngo Dinh Nhu's interview also angered American officials here, who spent the last two years laboring to erase Vietnamese suspicions.

In essence one allied government has accused another of plotting a coup, which the other has most strongly denied in the past. The incident underlined the serious strains in present American-Vietnamese relations, and the sense of mutual suspicion which exists.

Some Americans contend that if Americans had played any part in the revolt it would have been successful.

The rebels seized the city and the Presidential palace on Nov. 11, 1960, but their failure to take control of the radio station allowed President Ngo Dinh Diem to broadcast messages to other units, who finally arrived next day and crushed the revolt.

Mr. Carver was said to be a friend of Col. Nguyen Chanh Thi, the rebel commander. Mr. Thi, after the defeat of the rebels, and he left the country.

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Diem Seen Secure In South Viet-Nam

By Malcolm W. Browne

SAIGON, July 5 (AP)—President Ngo Dinh Diem of crisis-torn South Viet-Nam is showing the world it's a mistake to write him off too soon. His ninth anniversary in the presidency is coming up Sunday.

The tough-willed, 62-year-old South Vietnamese leader has survived two months of a church-state crisis involving a Buddhist campaign for greater religious freedom and is as strongly at the helm of his Communist-threatened republic as ever.

As if to emphasize the strength of its position, Diem's American-supported government today put on trial 19 Vietnamese army men—officers and soldiers—held in prison more than two years as confessed leaders of an abortive revolt Nov. 11, 1960.

They face possible death sentences on a charge of treason.

Prosecutors told the three-judge military court they had proof that foreigners were involved in the uprising. Presumably they meant Americans. Ngo Dinh Nhu, brother and political adviser of the President, and various other government officials have said some Americans helped the rebels.

American Backer Named

Sources close to the court said evidence was an unsigned letter in French addressed to an American named Carver. The letter reportedly complained to Carver that he had failed to give the leaders certain assistance and had promised to help them overthrow the armed revolt.

The U.S. State Dept. has denied any official or unofficial support for the rebels. Some embassy sources have said U.S. A.C. agents tried to dissuade the rebels from carrying out their attempt.

Government-picked defense lawyers, who were given three days to prepare their briefs for the mass trial, argued that the defendants could not be charged with treason unless foreign involvement could be proved.

Buddhist leaders here still are pledged to continue their struggle with the administration of Diem, a Roman Catholic, for equal standing with the Catholic minority in religious affairs and for social justice.

But the chances of a general uprising against Diem, which looked like a possibility during demonstrations that followed the killing of eight Buddhists in a riot at Hue May 8, seem to have passed.

Uprising Discount

The Vietnamese armed forces have shown no sign of support for dissident Buddhist leaders.

A Saigon cabinet minister, who himself has survived many crises, assessed the situation.

"If a government like ours is to be overthrown, it must be done in 24 hours. Otherwise, rebellions will always fail. The Buddhist problem is solved. If they make further difficulties, I can assure you there will be no shooting and they will have no martyrs. We have ways of dealing with the situation more effectively."

There has been open criticism by some American officials, but there seems no doubt that U.S. support for Diem and the war against Communist guerrillas will continue.

A sampling of Vietnamese public opinion in Saigon indicates many residents are bored with the issue. Crowds no longer swarm around Buddhist monks. Even a spectacular suicide by a Buddhist monk might come as an anti-climax. Street barricades